



GPI

at

FIVE

THE STORY SO FAR

By

GIRLS' POWER INITIATIVE (GPI) NIGERIA
CALABAR / BENIN CITY DECEMBER, 1999

Edited by: Grace Osakue



GPI

at

FIVE

THE STORY SO FAR

By

GIRLS' POWER INITIATIVE (GPI) NIGERIA
CALABAR / BENIN CITY DECEMBER, 1999

Edited by: Grace Osakue

Girls' Power Initiative [GPI] Nigeria.

Headquarters
SOUTH EAST CENTRE
44 Ekpo Abasi Street
P.O.Box 3663 UNICAL Post Office, Calabar, Nigeria
Tel: 234-87-230920 Fax: 234-87-236298
E-mail: gpicalabar@gpinigeria.org

SOUTH-WEST CENTRE:

2 Hudson Lane off 95 Akpakpava Street
by Dawson Junction
P.O.Box 7400, Benin City
Tel/Fax 234-52-255162
E-mail: gpibenin@gpinigeria.org
website: www.gpinigeria.org

ISBN 978-34786-8-0

© GPI Nigeria 1999

Any part of this book may be copied or adapted to meet local needs without permission from the authors provided that the parts copied are distributed free or at cost [not for profit]. Any commercial reproduction needs prior permission from GPI Nigeria. The organisation will appreciate receiving copies of all materials in which these findings are used.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Telling the story of GPI at five has been an onerous task. One that brings to mind the need to thank all who have helped to translate the vision of the founders into reality.

Topping this list is our friend Andrea Irvin who in September 1993 listened while Bene and I were trying to use words to describe in detail the task we had set for ourselves. We also thank her for sharing invaluable resources with us that helped us to have increased confidence that though novel, our mustard seed had potential.

We also thank the parents of our first set of girls who without demanding proof of success, entrusted their daughters in our care, and we owe enormous gratitude to the girls, especially Ekanem, Pearl and Unoma, who set the pace for the openness of sharing in GPI that has made our meetings a 'must not miss' for all members.

We thank our funders for their continued faith in GPI methods, particularly IWHC which gave us our first grant. Last but not least is Louis Ikoghode whose literary skills helped to determine and sift what must be published out of the several thoughts and stories GPI had to tell in five years, and all GPI staff whose loyalty and dedication have made GPI what it is today.

Grace Osakue

Co-ordinator (South West Zone) December 1999.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgment	<i>iii</i>
Background	1
The Beginning	3
GPI Today	9
GPI in the new Millennium	20
Conclusion	23
Appendix	24

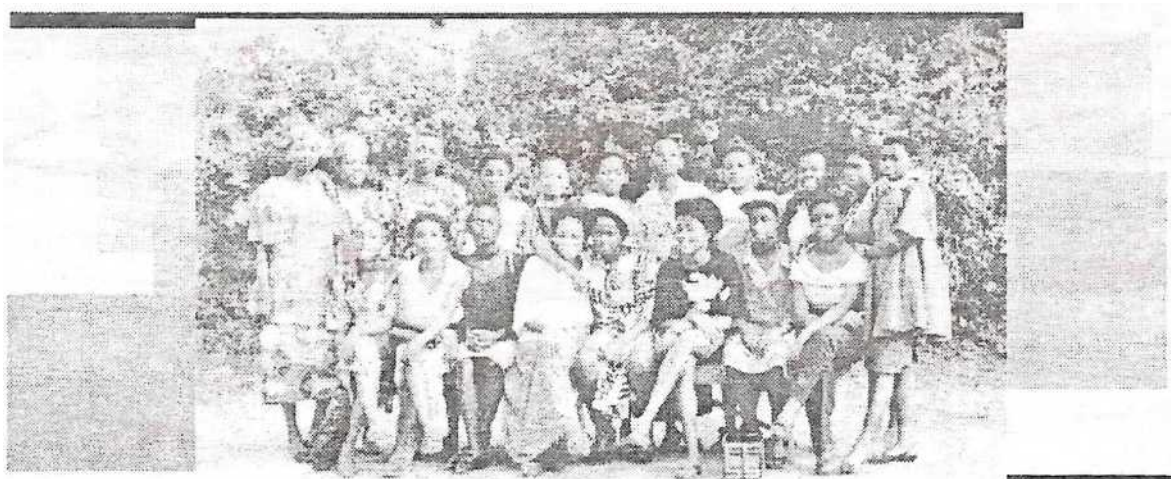
GPI AT FIVE - THE STORY SO FAR

BACKGROUND

In the annals of the history of the nation Nigeria, the 1980's would stand out as the years the largely ignorant and complacent majority of women in the society woke up to the realisation of the urgent need for emancipation from the shackles of gender discrimination and subjugation, deprivation, oppression and the overriding poverty of women.

The sermon of emancipation was preached by the vocal and enlightened minority who by virtue of education and exposure had come to realise that the status quo of women in Nigeria, and indeed the larger society, was an aberration. They championed the cause of women and posited that the position of women must necessarily be beside the man and not behind him in all respect. Their endeavours culminated in the birth of women liberation movements which through research, information, documentation, lobbying, education and various other ways sought to improve the lot of the downtrodden woman in the society.

After two decades of efforts, it has been discovered that women have been placed in such a disadvantaged position and diverse forces have conspired against them for so long that the overwhelming majority of them have developed an attitude of



Humble beginnings. Entire GPI South-West membership in Dec., 1994

passivity to their plight resulting from deep seated inferiority complex and low self esteem. Indeed, some women have come to accept their plight to the extent that they have inadvertently joined the forces working against the emancipation of women from the clutches of ignorance and oppression. The coming of the 1990's brought more experience and diverse initiatives into the movement. The need to "catch them young" became obvious as the need for organisations to work with young girls became apparent. In July 1994, an organisation called Girls' Power Initiative. {GPI} was formally inaugurated to fill this vacuum and propel the adolescent girl-child "towards an empowered womanhood"



Humble beginnings. Entire GPI South-East membership in Dec., 1994



THE BEGINNING

WHAT IS GPI?

GPI is an acronym for Girls' Power Initiative. It is a non-profit, nonreligious, non-partisan and non-governmental organisation that seeks to empower girls, especially those between the ages of 10 – 18 with leadership and self-reliance skills and promote their sexual and reproductive health and rights. The word "initiative" denotes the power or opportunity to act or take charge before others do; the capacity and the imagination to realise what needs to be done, together with the courage and willingness to do it especially without others' help.

As an organisation, GPI aims at being at the forefront of the struggle to raise womanhood from its age-long under privileged position of powerlessness and subject of discrimination in the family and society to being recognised as human beings sharing humanity in partnership with men.

The empowerment of women implies the process by which women strengthen their capacity and develop their talents individually and collectively to identify, understand and overcome gender discrimination thus acting to take control of their lives. The goal of GPI as an organisation is aptly encapsulated in its motto: 'Towards an empowered womanhood', and the term empowerment utilised here has a definite and concrete connotation. It connotes the ability to speak out one's mind; knowing and asserting one's rights; breaking the cloak of shyness, ignorance and silence; seeing beyond sexist prejudices; feeling safe and comfortable in expressing what one knows to be right, and being firm not diffident in doing so; et cetera.

THE VISIONARIES

The success story of Girls Power Initiative today started with the coming together of two individuals - Bene Madunagu and Grace Osakue, who have been in the fore front of women's movement in Nigeria and Africa. They were both members of Women In Nigeria (WIN) where they held offices as state and national officers at various times. Just before they decided to form GPI, they commenced a study under the International Reproductive Rights Research Action Group (IRRRAG) study where they discovered again and again that the strategy of having to make efforts to empower women was not the only strategy that could be adopted in helping them know and actualise their rights.

They decided to utilise the approach of 'catching them young' especially when they were confronted with situations where women did not quite appreciate their plight. They saw so much helplessness and low self-esteem amongst the women and felt that



Mumy Bee (Bene Madunagu) and Mumy Gee (Grace Osakue) founding co-ordinators of GPI

things could be changed faster by working with adolescents. Thus began their work in adolescent human rights which had to be broadened when they discovered that the adolescent needed more

than human rights because of the varied problems that confronted them at that impressionable period of their lives. The needs of the adolescent have increased their focus from just human rights to sexuality education and personal empowerment.

Bene Madunagu who is currently the National/South East centre Coordinator is a Marxist feminist who believes that equality is not only ideal but also possible. Grace Osakue, the South West Co-ordinator, is one who loves building the individual, and believes the girl child is deserving of special attention at this time. She is a teacher.

THE VISION

The Vision of GPI is to become a vibrant and empowered national feminist



Andrea Irvin, the first person (other than Bene and Grace) to hear of GPI.

organisation with critical perspectives on social and gender prejudices or issues. An organisation committed to managing and educating girls to be healthy, self reliant, productive and confident women for the achievement of positive changes and transformation of patriarchal values in Nigeria in the nearest future. To actualise this lofty vision, the following objectives were laid down for the organisation.

GPI OBJECTIVES

- a) Assessing and documenting current understanding and knowledge among girls on human rights concepts, health issues and empowerment.
- b) Conducting education sessions on health, human rights, gender empowerment and sexuality.
- c) Exploring and clarifying human rights concepts, health and gender issues.
- d) Disseminating new knowledge on experiences and ideas about health, human rights empowerment and sexuality.
- e) Publishing and disseminating relevant information through leaflets, newsletters, pamphlets, books, video films, etc.
- f) Conducting essay competitions on relevant topics on girls health, human rights and empowerment.
- g) Forming Girls Power Initiative groups of about 30 members each and outreach groups in schools.
- h) Networking with relevant groups.
- i) Effective representation and participation in local, regional and international levels on issues of health, human rights and empowerment.
- j) Holding meetings and counselling sessions with girls.
- k) Assisting girls to identify and critically examine issues of gender prejudices and consequently design and implement actions towards changing sexist social values.
- l) Developing capacity of personnel to cope with the execution of GPI programs.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of GPI as a national organisation is to educate girls (especially girls between the ages of 10 - 18 years) concerning their health, rights, self

reliance skills and needs from a gender perspective through information, communication, counselling and community intervention. The primary aim of GPI is to promote the rights of girls and mobilise them for development and participation through education, research and relevant studies. In this quest to better the lot of the woman of tomorrow, the GPI program was developed.

GPI PROGRAM

GPI has developed a curriculum for information, education and communication (IEC) on sexuality and reproductive health/rights of adolescent girls. Through meeting with girls, they are taught what sexual health entails and trained to acquire skills that transform them into gender sensitive, articulate and confident young women.

The program has necessitated the development of resource centres in Benin and Calabar where literature and materials on issues that have to do with women and adolescent reproductive health and rights are available. Furthermore, GPI has set up a system of organisation and is involved in the publication of newsletters, pamphlets, and books. These publications are meant for informing, educating and communicating women and adolescent reproductive health rights issues to other people or outsiders who are not opportuned to join the organization.

GPI PHILOSOPHY

Girls Power Initiative recognizes the right of girls to survival, effective protection, development and participation. The Initiative believes that these rights are inalienable and cannot be achieved in the present circumstances where the Nigerian society hardly acknowledges their relevance. The society sees girls and women as people that should be seen and not heard even when they are in position to contribute meaningful ideas and input to the social, political and economic development of the country.

GPI CURRICULUM

Education for girls consist of a set of age-specific curricula for each group focused on:

Personal Empowerment issues: Body image, self-identity, self- esteem, assertiveness, goals setting, decision making, leadership and communication skills, pubertal changes and child Psychology.
Interpersonal Relationships: Friendship, love, infatuation, dating, intimacy, marriage, childbearing, divorce, etc.

Sexual Health: STD's including HIV/AIDS, Anatomy and Physiology of human systems, Contraception, Abortion, Cancers, Pregnancy and childbirth.

Violence Against Girls and Women: Rape, including Incest, Battery, Harassment and Assault.

Women, Society and Culture: Gender, Feminism, Socio-cultural practices, etc.

Legal Issues: Conventions, Constitution, Declarations Bills, Decrees, National, Regional and Global legal instruments.

Youth Activism and Community Intervention.

Other activities include excursions, counselling and referrals, economic skills training and special seminars, conferences, workshops, competitions e.g. quiz, debates, drama, arts, essay, etc. Public education: Use of Newsletters, Regular Radio Programmes, Forum for Parents and Daughters, Forum for Parents, Teachers, Guardians, Health providers and Media workshops.

CHAPTER TWO

GPI TODAY

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Today, GPI operates from two co-ordinating centres located in South Western and South Eastern Nigeria - Benin City in Edo State and Calabar in Cross River State. It is noteworthy that these centres were intentionally sited in the so-called "Minority Areas" of the country. The centres are overseen by two co-ordinators who are responsible to the executive board and the Board of Trustees.

The co-ordinating centres serve the purpose of office space for staff, resource centre/library, space for programme execution, team meetings, counselling and contact for networking activities. As far back as 1997, it became evident that the co-ordinating centres had become too small as a result of the sharp growth in the number of girls utilising the facilities and benefiting from the GPI program.



GPI ACTIVITIES

When the GPI programme started, the zonal co-ordinators started the sensitisation and training with their daughters and their friends. Over the years, the expansion of GPI awareness and intake has been based on those first sets of GPI girls. Their friends got to know through them and seeing the difference desired to be a part of it, sometimes, parents come in contact with GPI girls, desire their daughters to be part of it and enrol them. The story of GPI's growth is akin to that of the proverbial Mustard Seed.

GPI has grown through the testimonies of people, activities, information disseminated through the newsletters, media coverage of activities and most recently, through public enlightenment in the electronic media. Five main avenues have been developed for the actualisation of the GPI vision.

discussion/ teaching sessions at the zonal centres.

outreach programmes in schools.

information dissemination through publications.

organisation of seminars/workshops and other enlightenment programme.

library services, counselling/referrals.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

- Misconceptions about GPI. In this era of cultism in our schools, people have become unduly suspicious, sceptical and oftentimes, cynical of otherwise well meaning intentions.
- Myths and taboos about sexual and reproductive health and rights

issues. Entrenched over the ages, these myths stemming largely from ignorance and taboos put in place to safeguard certain selfish interests have become a problem.

- Internalisation of sexist values, norms and practices even by victims.
- Persistence of patriarchal values.

Ignorance.

- Religious fanaticism.
- Poverty.

CENTRE PROGRAMMES

At the onset, enrolment unto GPI was an all year round affair with candidates visiting the two centres to make their intention known and be admitted into programme; members bringing others; parents bringing daughters. By and large as the years rolled by, the demand for membership increased to an extent where the executive board had to limit enrolment to a twice yearly affair. -in January and August. In the South - West zone, to reduce complaints

from various quarters, a one month period of talking about GPI on radio precedes the August enrolment exercise while the South East zone runs a radio programme called "GPI on Air."



GPI South-West staff and girls pose with Bene in Calabar

Financial and space constraints have necessitated stricter compliance with enrolment guidelines. To cope with the influx of students who are desirous of being a part of GPI, each zone has resorted to enrolling students into two or more classes subject to the availability of staff to handle their teaching and training activities.

WEEKLY MEETINGS

At the zonal centres, girls who are enrolled with GPI attend meetings on Saturdays in Benin and Sundays in Calabar where they are educated on their rights and health and taught life skills. The opening sessions of these meetings are chaired and rapporteured by different girls in each group - a strategy that is meant to help them develop leadership skills.

Participants at these meetings are encouraged to "check-in" (report) one or two events in the past week during which they utilised and applied their GPI knowledge. Other features of these meetings include the use of diverse participatory techniques like role play, reading, writing on the flip chart; brainstorming on issues; myth and fact games and small group assignments by facilitators who lead discussions of the day's lesson. Thus, participatory methodology is the main format for conducting the weekly meetings and the facilitator is always there to guide discussions and provide technical information to break the myths and misconceptions girls imbibe from society on various issues. Feed back for the past five years have shown that checkingin processes as well as individual and group exercises assist girls in overcoming shyness and fortify them to speak boldly in public. Sharing experiences expose them to new situations and events and discussions on these issues further enhance the girls' ability to take social action towards gender equality and women empowerment.

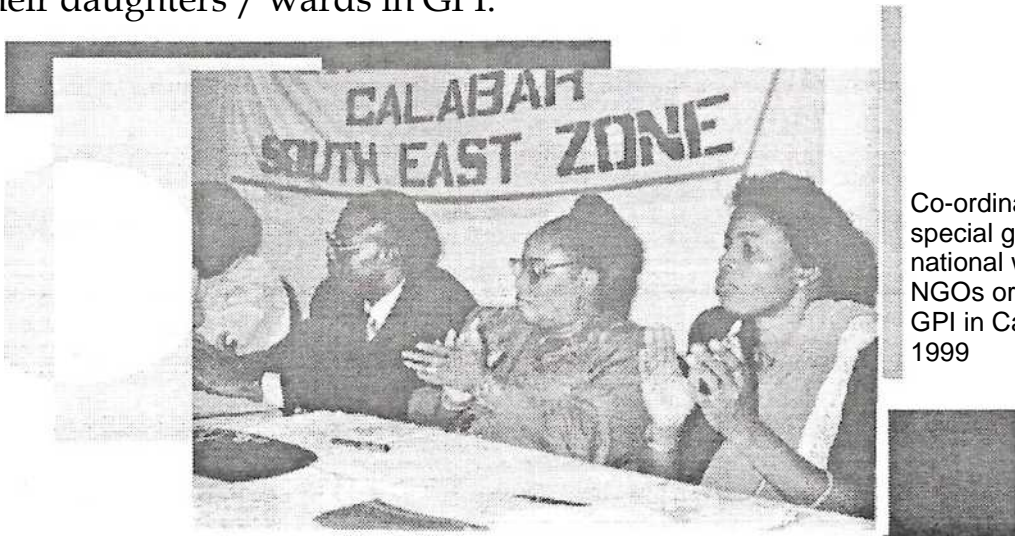
participation at weekly meetings have become so popular that the centres are beginning to have accommodation problems. In the South West, the meetings have been shifted to a secondary school facility.

In the course of their three years tutelage, GPI girls come to learn that to a large extent, ignorance about ones sexuality, sexual and reproductive health and rights; poor and inaccessible services and information constitute the main reasons for high maternal mortality, teenage pregnancy, unsafe abortion, child marriage (cradle snatching), school drop outs and all other indicators of poor health and low self esteem and status of women.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Over the years, GPI has formed the tradition of carrying out public enlightenment activities focused at mobilising public support for its empowerment programme. Yearly in the two zones such activities are held to commemorate-the International Womens Day on March 8th and 5 days of Action are observed from June 12 -16 to mark the Day of the African Child. Parents/Guardians, teachers, health workers fora as well as parent/daughters fora are held annually to mobilise them to join hands to

support their daughters / wards in GPI.



Co-ordinators and special guests at a national workshop for NGOs organised by GPI in Calabar, Jan., 1999

. EXCURSIONS

GPI recognises that today, girls are socialised to aspire to sexist professions and are told that there are professions that are not for females. In view of this and in an attempt to break this myth, career visits to various institutions and organisations feature prominently in the yearly activities at the project centres. At the South West zone for instance, May 27th is set aside for such excursions and in 1999, the girls were able to visit the Seven-up Bottling Company at Iguosa near Benin, College of Medicine, University of Benin; The Nigerian Airport Authority, Benin; the Nigeria Institute of Oil palm Research, NIFOR; and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Warri.

Such visits have exposed the fact that there is no profession in the universe that takes as criteria, what differentiates females from males. The girls also come to the realisation that what a human being is trained to do, she or he can do it and women can be company directors and still be good wives and mothers.

SKILLS TRAINING

The economic empowerment of the girl child is part of the overall empowerment of the woman. A lot of young girls fall into the snare of premature and unprotected sexual relationships and other unhealthy practices as a result of financial handicap which makes *it difficult* for them to *meet their basic* needs. For instance, GPI girls are taught that it is more hygienic to utilise sanitary towels or menstrual napkins rather than tissue paper during menstruation. But where do they get the money for these items which are relatively more expensive? They are also taught that relationship can survive without sex but the easiest way to reduce pressure and make it in any relationship (sexual or otherwise) is to be able to give- probably to the same degree the other is giving. This giving can be monetary or in kind.

When girls end up at the receiving end, receiving constant favours from their friends, they end up being pressured into sex. GPI girls are advised in the course of their programme not to accept money and gift in exchange for their right to bodily integrity. However, the fact remains that poverty can make the girl deaf to this advice and cause her to satisfy her need sometimes including the need for food and school fees at the expense of her health. To help them resist this pressure, the need was found to teach them some economic skills and once a year, the girls are assembled for a skills training session in each centre where they learn to produce simple things to meet their material needs either directly or by sale of such items to meet other needs.



GPI South-East staff and girls at the 1999 South-West Skills training workshop in Benin

The first aspect of the training is a compulsory session on article writing which is taught in order to sustain the newsletter published by GPI with 98% input from the girls. Beyond article writing, such economic empowerment skills as soap making (soda and detergent), baking, juice making, production of such fashion accessories as hair ruffles, slippers, bags, bangles and photography and video recording have been taught the girls over time.

Added to the economic skills are other basic skills such as auto-mechanics and electricity which have been taught so that the girls possess the basic knowledge of the parts and functions of cars and the basics of electricity which they hitherto believed to be areas restricted to menfolk.

SOCIAL ACTION

In 1998 social action was introduced into the GPI programme for the dual purpose of reaching out to educate the ignorant majority in the wider society and enabling the girls to facilitate the enlightenment of others especially in the rural areas as part of their graduation requirement.

The Seeders '99 graduating set of the South East zone for instance, were able to reach out to the Asabanka Community where mothers and daughters gathered to receive them and hear them impart the knowledge they had derived from GPI. At Egor Local Government Area of Edo State, the Oasis '99 set facilitated the sensitisation session in six schools with close to a thousand people in attendance over the three week period of the Social Action in August 1999. Amongst other issues, they sensitised them on battery in relationships, female genital mutilation, abortion and teenage pregnancy.

COUNSELLING / REFERRALS

Every GPI girl is encouraged to visit the centre and consult our training staff for counselling when they have problems. Often times referrals are made to clinics where GPI has established working links and where the needs are social, other avenues are used to address them. The availability of counselling services has been most vital in the achievement of our goal of keeping our girls healthy and vibrant.

OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Aware of the fact that all adolescent girls require GPI information and education but many are for various reasons unable to visit the GPI centres, the organisation instituted the outreach programme which entails conducting lessons in selected schools and some intensive holiday programmes for such girls.

EXPECTATIONS FOR GPI OUTREACH PROGRAMME

The outreach programme was designed to:

- (a) . Provide an avenue to reach out to adolescent girls who cannot physically come to the centre (in Calabar and Benin) due to distance, lack of funds, parental consent, time or poverty.
- (b) . Enlighten and educate more adolescent girls on gender issues and personal empowerment.
- (c) Reduce teenage pregnancies, school drop-outs and sexual exploitation through passage of information, education, skills development and empowerment.
- (d) . Increase the number of girls who would in turn impact on their peers and communities to meet the long term social goal of gender equality.
- (e) . To publicise GPI's work and attract more girls to receive information and education.

The GPI outreach programme is currently taking place in seven schools in the South West zone namely, Ceta International Group of Schools; Evbareke Secondary School; Federal Government Girls College; Idia College; New Era College; and Excel Group of Schools and Baptist Junior High School all in Benin City. In the South East, School based outreach discussions are conducted at Government Technical College, Ikot Efanga Mkpa; Unique Secondary Commercial School, Ikot Omin; Nico Secondary Commercial School, Calabar and National Comprehensive Secondary School, Anantigha in Calabar South.

Though the incessant closure of schools and compact school curricula remain major problems militating against the schools outreach programme, GPI has developed holiday programmes to make up for lost time and three classes of participants usually avail themselves of the opportunity. These are teachers, senior secondary school girls and junior secondary school girls.

The curriculum for outreach is different and narrower than the curriculum

pursued at the centres for the following reasons.

- (a) Centre programmes run throughout the year with a break only a Easter, Christmas and New year while for the outreach, the schoo curricula determines the period and length.
- (b) . Centre programmes take place at weekends and are not affected by school examinations, "fee drive" or other school activities. On the contrary, outreach programmes take place on school days with the limited time schedule arranged and they are usually affected by holidays, examinations and other school activities.

Methods at outreach programmes are however similar to those at the centre but with more of individual work to ensure full participation. This means that rather than general group brainstorming, a modified format of asking each girl to write 2 to 3 thoughts on a particular issue has been adopted. Each girl reads out what she had written and this allows everyone to participate and break shyness.

The above method reduces the problem of only a few bold girls giving answers to the detriment of others. The girls also get involved in practical exercises, often, they are shared into small groups to brainstorm on specific topics given to the groups and each group selects a presenter to report back. "Checking in" is also done at the outreach programme.

Analysis of Participants Assessment of the Outreach Programme in the South East zone, at the beginning of the Outreach Programme in January 1997.

At the beginning of the programme in January 1997, assessment forms were given to the girls to help assess their level of awareness. These same forms are administered at the end of the grant period to assess impact of the outreach programme. A total of 250 students completed the evaluation forms at the end. Data collected showed that 30.4 % of the total respondents were from National Comprehensive Secondary School, 34.8% from Unique Secondary Commercial School; 10% from NICO Secondary Commercial School (Fee

Drive period) and 24.8% from Government technical School.

Responses show that all the students learned much from the GPI outreach programmes. This is represented by a record of 100%. Ninety-two percent of the respondents rated themselves "greatly" while only 8% rated themselves "average". The data showed that they had gained much from the discussions.

On the topics from which they had benefited most, responses were varied. 41.6% said they have benefited most from all the topics treated with them, while 10.4% benefited most from Rape and Sexual harassment discussion, 8.8 % from Self-Esteem and Assertiveness.

Data on comments on the outreach programme showed that 96% of the students expressed the view that the programme was very useful to them and should continue, they maintained that it was a profitable programme that has helped them to speak out, defend their rights and develop high self-esteem. They recommended the extension of the outreach to other schools, especially in the rural areas.

MEASURES/INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Number of girls rose from 15 in July 1994 to over 3,000.
- Building self-esteem and self-confidence in poor, shy girls.
- Increased gender awareness.
- Positive self image among girls, knowledge and practice of personal hygiene.
- Increased confidence as demonstrated by their public performance.
- Numbers seeking counselling.
- Six groups of graduands, 3 in South East and 3 from the South West.
- Increasing number of parents attending GPI events.
- Government and community recognition.
- Public utilisation of GPI library.
- Increasing mailing list for GPI Newsletters.
- Valedictory speeches by GPI graduands.
- Personal impact assessment by graduates.
- Personal impact assessment by staff.

CHAPTER THREE

GPI IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOPS

As the much publicised millennium approaches GPI has already evolved and perfected strategies that would ensure its continued existence and relevance in the scheme of tilings. At its biannual strategic planning workshop which came up in May 1999 at Enugu, the activities of the organisation for the past five years were critically examined and a blueprint to guide the organization into the new millennium was drawn up.



GPI staff at a strategic planning workshop in 1997

The GPI co-ordinators, facilitators from both zones, programme officer and support staff attended the planning workshop which provided a forum for participants to explore GPI's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. A review of the mission, vision, objectives, strategies and activities was undertaken and the group engaged in prioritization of such strategies and activities. Budget appraisal also featured in the strategic planning workshop.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

GPI organizes in-house quarterly training of staff. The facilitators undergo training in facilitating skills, youth development and counselling while monthly workshops are held by staff who attended other seminars or training workshops to share with others new information and skills acquired.

In the external front, staff development usually takes two forms:

- a) Attendance at conferences and workshops of other organisations by invitation.
- b) Attendance at training workshops organised by other organisations who charge fees for such training.

GPI's policy at least in the South West, remains that every staff must attend one formal training and honour at least four invitations on behalf of the organisation yearly. Over the years, the organisation has come to be taken seriously by other organisations because of the competence of our staff. This policy of deliberate exposure and training is responsible.

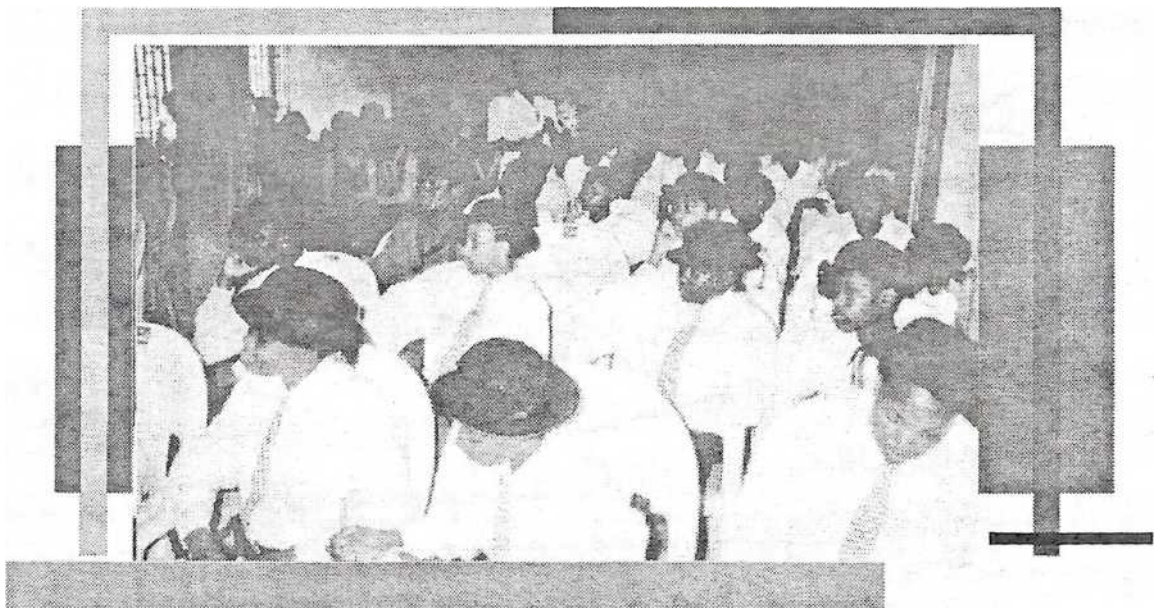
PUBLICATIONS

In the past five years, in addition to the new well-circulated quarterly magazines - GIRLS POWER, GPI has to its credit the publication of numerous pamphlets on issues confronting the adolescent girl.

Among these publications are pamphlets on violence against girls, Body image, Self-identity, Assertiveness, HIV/AIDS, Moods, FGM, and Relationships, to help others replicate the GPI process, a curriculum detailing GPI methods and contents has also been published. As GPI enters another year and prepares for a new millennium, there are indications that many more publications which are already on the drawing board would be added to her library to boost the knowledge of girls seeking such information.

SEED GROUPS

GPI is privileged at five to have mentored the formation of other adolescent and women's rights organisations. Noteworthy is the fact that some GPI graduates have themselves commenced social action in the communities through groups they have put together for that purpose.



Students in attendance at a GPI function

In the South West, Face -It organisation which is visibly involved in the fight against sexual violence on University of Benin campus is the initiative of two GPI graduates from the Oasis '97 Class. In the South East, two seed groups namely the Women's Health Empowerment and Action Project (*WHEAP*) and Action have been formed by the Seeders '97 and '98 sets respectively.

The existence of these groups is a testimony to the impact of GPI on their founders and the potentials the GPI program poses for social development.

CONCLUSION

GPI started like a small dream and today, one is opportuned to look back at the past five years of its existence. The task of selfless service which the co-ordinators and staff have taken upon themselves has started yielding fruits in the form of the assertive and empowered young graduates of GPI who have been equipped to face the challenges and weather all odds to create a change.

The heartfelt feelings of one of the founding co-ordinators of GPI aptly illuminate the future pathway they expect the organisation to follow. In her words, "my vision for GPI in the years to come and indeed the next millennium, is that of an organisation that grows to become an institution; an organisation that is a reference point in every way you can think of; an organisation that would not have to write proposals to have funds for its activities; an organisation that remains perfectly on course and focused. Our dream and joy is to see GPI become an institution that will be a reference point on all issues concerning adolescent rights and sexuality education."

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. That step has been taken, and the results are beginning to bloom forth.

APPENDIX

GPI TEAM

National

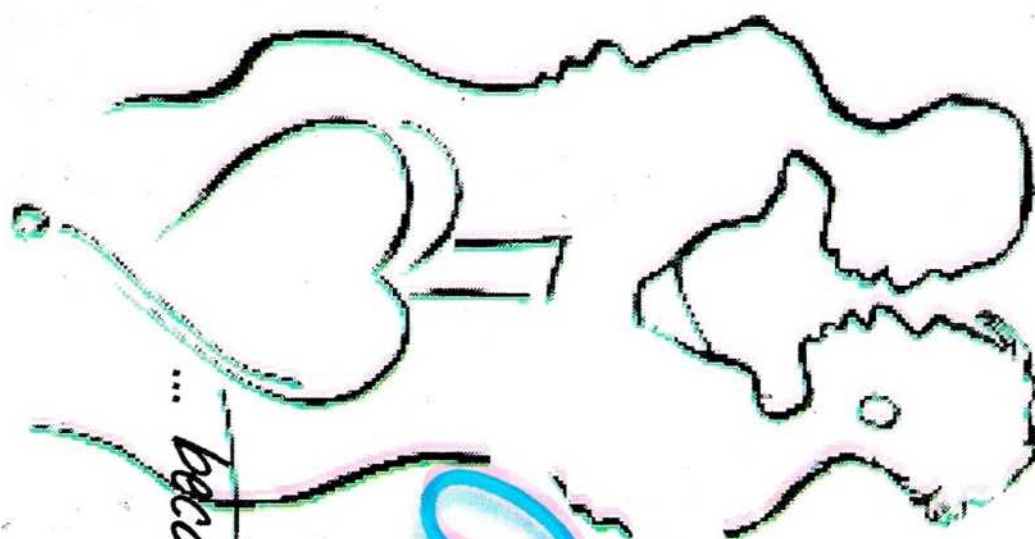
Bene E. Madunagu	Chairperson, Executive Board
Grace Osakue	Member Executive Board
Assumpta Ekpeyong	Programme Officer
Kunle Akisanya	Accountant

South-West

Grace Osakue	Co-ordinator
Fatima Ehita Ikoghode	Facilitator
Iyen-Oghogho Ohonba	Facilitator
Abies Lawani	Facilitator
Joy Ogbomo	Facilitator
Nkiru Ndokuba	Youth Corper/Research Assistant
Ifeyinwa Madu	Temporary Facilitator
Pearl Osakue	Temporary Facilitator
Phil Ikoghode	Office Manager
Jane Schholastica Aihumekeokhai	Accounts Assistant
Ese Amadasun	Computer/Admin. Assistant
Mary-Jane Chime	Library/Admin. Assistant
Patience Ojeigbo	Typist
Austin Uzoma	Day Security Officer
Sunday Musa	Night Watchman

South-East

Bene E. Madunagu	Co-ordinator
Paul Johnson	Office Manager
Ofonasaha Ekpoudom	Personal Assistant/Facilitator
Eka Bassey	Senior Facilitator
Imoh Patrick Bernard	Facilitator 1
Victoria Effiom Edet	Facilitator 11
Caroline Nelson Edom	Facilitator
Owoidoho Okon Utak	Accounts Assistant/ Facilitator
Felicia Eteanwan Eso	Facilitator
Diana Isaac Ibok	Research Assistant/ Facilitator
Iquo Etim Nkuda	Accounts Assistant/ Facilitator
Arit Etim Okon	Secretarial Assistant
Iyene Regan Emah	Computer Operator
Maris Idowu Arabu	Computer Operator
James Eni Ibor	Operations & Security Officer
Ubong Ekon Andy	Operations & Security Officer
Margaret Afangideh	Library Assistant



... because of its repercussions!

NO to Casual Sex

ISBN - 978 - 34786 - 8 - 0